



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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**January 13, 2006**

**CONTACT PERSON:**

**SUSAN W. BROOKS**

**United States Attorney**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**17 INDICTED ON FEDERAL CHARGES  
FOR COCAINE TRAFFICKING  
11 DRUG DEFENDANTS CHARGED  
IN JEFFERSON COUNTY**

**PRESS RELEASE**

Seventeen individuals were indicted by a federal grand jury sitting in Indianapolis for a large scale conspiracy to possess and distribute cocaine. On the morning of January 12, 2006, approximately 75 federal, state, and local law enforcement executed nine federal search warrants and 3 state search warrants at 12 different locations in Jefferson County, Northern Kentucky, and Jennings County. Approximately \$6,000.00 cash was seized along with 16 weapons and small quantities of controlled substances, including one methamphetamine lab. Eleven Defendants were charged as a result of this investigation in Jefferson County Courts on drug related charges, including possession and dealing. During the course of the investigation

a total of approximately 2 ½ kilograms of cocaine were seized, and a total of approximately \$51,000.00 in U. S. Currency.

Susan W. Brooks, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Indiana, announced today in a press conference with Dennis Wichern, Assistant Special Agent in Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration, Paul Whitesell, Superintendent, Indiana State Police, Chris Naylor, Jefferson County Prosecutor, Bill Andrews, Jefferson County Sheriff, Major Larry Turner, Indiana State Police, and John Dowd, Assistant United States Attorney, Steve Tesmer, Chief Deputy Prosecutor, Jefferson County, that the indictment was the result of a multi-jurisdictional, multi-agency Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) that targeted and dismantled a drug trafficking organization which operated primarily in Southeastern Indiana, Northern Kentucky, and Chicago, Illinois.

The indictment alleges that in December 2004, the Indiana State Police initiated an investigation into a drug trafficking organization headed by John L. "Monty" Scruggs, based on information provided by the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department. The investigation revealed that the drug organization was trafficking large amounts of cocaine and marijuana to Southeastern Indiana and Northern Kentucky from Chicago, Illinois. In June of 2005, a joint investigation between the Indiana State Police and U. S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) was initiated. It was learned during the investigation that Scruggs and Thomas, as leaders of the conspiracy, acquired kilogram quantities of cocaine from their sources of supply of cocaine from Chicago, Illinois, namely from Torres, Betancourt, and Carmona. Couriers transported quantities routinely from Chicago to Scruggs and Thomas in Jefferson and Jennings Counties who then distributed to approximately eight mid-level distributors/dealers.

Two stash houses were maintained to facilitate discussions with the Chicago sources and to exchange payment for the drugs.

Susan W. Brooks, United States Attorney, stated, “Cocaine continues to be an extremely serious drug threat to communities throughout the Southern District of Indiana. This indictment demonstrates that even a wonderful community like Madison, Indiana, can have in its midst a cocaine trafficking organization with ties to Mexico. I applaud the partnership between DEA, Indiana State Police and the many local law enforcement agencies for dismantling this organization. We hope these arrests send a message to drug dealers and drug abusers in communities large and small that federal law enforcement stands willing to work hand-in-hand with local authorities to protect the health and safety of the citizens.”

The following persons were indicted:

North Vernon, IN: John L. Scruggs, 33, (in custody)

Madison, IN: Randy Thomas, 33 (in custody)

Chicago: Carlos Torres, 28 (fugitive)  
Francisco Betancourt, 25 (in custody)  
Nestor Carmona, 26 (fugitive)

Kentucky: Jonathan Polley, 25, Carrolton, KY (in custody)  
Jeremy Young, 24, Milton, KY (in custody)

Madison, IN: Audra Gray, 27 (in custody)  
William Perry, 29 (in custody)  
Dianna Resendiz, 27 (in custody)  
Brian Buchanan, 45 (in custody)  
Dan Cook, 44 (in custody)  
Jerry Abbott, 27 (in custody)  
Larry Howard, III, 33 (surrendering)  
Jake Estes, 22 (in custody)  
Charles Childress, Jr., 25 (in custody)  
Joseph Griffin, 26 (in custody)

All defendants are facing 10 years to life imprisonment, followed by at least five years of supervised release and \$4,000,000.00 fines.

The following agencies participated in the investigation and arrests:

Drug Enforcement Administration, Indianapolis  
Drug Enforcement Administration, Chicago Field Division  
Drug Enforcement Administration, Louisville District Office  
U. S. Marshal's Service  
Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco Firearms and Explosives  
Indiana State Police  
Bloomington Police Department  
Carroll County Probation Department  
Hendricks County Sheriff's Department  
Indianapolis Police Department  
Jefferson County Sheriff's Department  
Jefferson County Division of Family and Children  
Kentucky State Police  
Madison Police Department  
North Vernon Police Department  
Trimble County Sheriff's Department

If you have information as to the whereabouts of the fugitives, please call the Indiana State Police at: 1-800-872-6743.

**The indictment is an allegation only, and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty at trial or by guilty plea.**

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